



# CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA LTD.

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CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA LTD.

F R O M

THE MARCH 1984 MEETING

O F

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### DIRECTORS' SEMINAR

31 Directors from 13 Co-operatives including one non-member Credit Union took part in what all agreed to have been a well presented valuable learning exercise on 14th to 15th March, 1984. As indicated in the initial promotional brochure for this seminar, numbers were restricted to enable participants to obtain maximum benefit from full involvement.

A waiting list was prepared for late nominees unable to be included in this session.

The Board has arranged a repeat of the programme on July 11th and 12th, 1984. Full details are in the brochure attached to this report.

Again, members will be limited and enrolment will be in order of firm nominations received.

### AMERICAN CO-OPERATIVES SUMMER INSTITUTE

To date four Australian Co-operative Directors/Executives have been nominated through the Federation to join about 2,000 U.S.A. co-operative colleagues in the Annual Co-operatives Summer Institute to be held this year on the campus of Montana State University.

### REGISTRAR TO STUDY OVERSEAS CO-OPERATIVE ORGANISATION AND OPERATION

At the suggestion of the Federation, the Victorian Government has authorised the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Mr. Bill Kilpatrick, to take part in the XVth International Congress of the International Centre of Research and Information on Public and Co-operative Economy to be held in Florence, Italy in April 1984. Attendance at the Congress will be followed-up with visits to Government and non-Government Co-operative administration and operations.

### 1984 CONFERENCE

Following the very successful Conference held last year, your Board has planned an even better programme for 1984 which will involve top level interstate and international speakers dealing with vital matters affecting all co-operatives in the 1980s.

Full details will be announced on completion of negotiations with the various speakers.

However, please note this important event for attendance on Tuesday, August 14th, 1984.

#### BOARD VACANCY

At the March meeting the resignation of Geoff Simm of Lakes Entrance Fishermen's Co-operative from the Board of the Federation was received with much regret. Geoff's own Co-operative's commitments have required this action but it in no way changes the commitment of Lakes Entrance Fishermen's Co-operative to the policies and operation of the Federation.

In accordance with Federation Rule 55, the Board is negotiating to fill this casual vacancy.

#### VICTORIAN TRADING CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

The five members of this Association, formed in 1968, agreed to transfer its secretariat and administration to the Co-operative Federation office with effect from 1st March, 1984.

A meeting of members and interested potential members will be called in the near future to consider future activities of the Association.

#### RELATIVE STRENGTHS IN CO-OPERATIVE SECTOR IN VICTORIA

##### Co-operative Societies 31st December 1983

Producers	68
Trading	108
Community Settlement	26
Community Advancement	1,022
Credit	<u>205</u>
	<u>1,429</u>

#### Summary of Financial Structure of Victorian Co-operatives

The 26th Annual Report of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies Victoria for the year ending 30th June 1980 states that 1,182 Co-operative Societies from 1,414 Co-operative Societies registered submitted returns to provide the following information.

	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>FUNDED BY</u>	
		<u>MEMBERS</u>	<u>OUTSIDE BORROWINGS</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$685 million</u>	<u>\$ 34 million</u>	<u>\$ 651 million</u>
192 Credit Societies	\$ 562 million	\$ 9 million	\$ 553 million
14 Agricultural Co-Operative Coys.	\$ 317 million	\$145 million	\$ 172 million
990 Producers, Trading, Community Co-Operative Socs.	<u>\$ 123 million</u>	<u>\$ 24 million</u>	<u>\$ 99 million</u>
Total including Agriculture Co-operative Companies	<u>\$ 1,002 million</u>	<u>\$178 million</u>	<u>\$ 824 million</u>

#### RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT

##### Minister's Advisory Committee on Co-operation

In our report from the February Board Meeting we advised of the formation of this Committee and of the appointment of our Executive Officer as one of its members.

All co-operatives should by now have received an explanatory letter from the Registrar of Co-operative Societies as convener of the Committee indicating one of its major tasks is preparation of appropriate legislation to be put before Parliament which means continuing the work of the Ministers Legislative Review Committee. In addition, under its terms of reference, the Committee is -

To establish the philosophy and principles of co-operation

Identify the essential elements of co-operative theory and ideology

Study development of co-operatives and the effect of changing economic, social and political factors on the movement

Identify Government's role in promoting co-operatives

Consider questions of industrial and economic democracy, rights of co-operative workers

Relationship of the co-operative ideal to the modern commercial world

The co-operative movement's role in assisting low income groups.

Members will remember what the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. Race Mathews had to say when opening our 1983 Conference.

He thought that perhaps the Co-operative Federation had chosen to regard itself too much apart from politics. He considered there was a need to change this attitude, to open dialogue with government, otherwise development of a wider acceptance of the co-operative philosophy would be slow to occur.

Whether we like it or not, there is an increasing political interest growing in the co-operative sector.

The role of the Federation therefore becomes increasingly important as the watchdog of true co-operative operations in Victoria. The Federation accepts this role, but requires the continued total support and involvement of all co-operatives to ensure the most effective discharge performance of this responsibility.

#### Review of financial institutions enquiry

In addition to the two Committees referred to above, the Victorian Government is conducting an enquiry to examine the appropriate response to likely changes in the roles of building societies, credit societies, co-operative housing societies and other financial institutions under State Government control.

The Co-operative Federation has made a submission to this Enquiry. The thrust of the submission was for the establishment of a Co-operative Bank to co-ordinate the supply needs of Credit Co-operatives and Permanent Building Societies and ensuring the resources of such co-operative financial institutions are available to meet the needs of trading, agricultural and service co-operatives. It is envisaged such a Co-operative Bank should broaden the base of liquidity within the co-operative sector by increasing the capability for attracting external funds - domestic, national and international Co-operative Bank funds at reasonable cost.

Such a Bank should also be structured to assist the rural credit needs of agricultural co-operatives and their producer members ensuring the commercial costs paid for funds remain within the co-operative system for its future development.

#### EMPLOYMENT CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

At a meeting of participants and potential participants in this Programme on 20th February, the Minister for Employment and Training Mr. Jim Simmonds outlined future policy relating to operation of the Programme. Other matters considered were conditions of funding applicants to the Programme, the education programme conducted by Preston College of TAFE for potential participants in the Programme, relationships of the Funding Committee.

Participant Co-operatives in the Programme elected three representatives to the Funding Committee. They are:

Jeff Langdon	- Goldfields Community Radio
Ron Harper	- Hodja Educational Resources
Jean Lehmann	- Bendigo Trading Co-operative

Bill Rawlinson, Executive Officer of the Federation continues as a member.

### S E R V I C E S

#### BULK FUEL PURCHASES

After extensive studies and negotiations, the Board accepted the recommendations from the committee investigating development of this service that the arrangements required to produce a viable scheme were not met and that the proposal be discontinued at this point of time.

#### CENTRAL BANKING

Investigations into this service are continuing with the Victorian Credit Co-operative Association.

GROUP INSURANCE

More response to the questionnaire issued is required to enable further studies to be advanced.

FEDERATION STAFF LEAVE

Executive Officer Bill Rawlinson will be taking Annual Leave in April. Office Manageress and Secretary Mrs. Ann Loban will be on sick leave also for some of this time. So if there are some delays in attending to enquiries in this period, the Board seeks your indulgence.